

WINTER
05-06



The FLAP

News for the Folks of Lake Accotink Park

703-569-3464



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Dredging up the facts

An important aspect of the Lake Accotink Park dredging project is keeping community members informed about the project. One way we do this is by publishing articles in our quarterly newsletter, which reaches 6000 homes around the lake. In this edition, we answer some of the most frequently asked questions about the dredging project.

Q: Why is Lake Accotink being dredged?

A: The goal of this project is to remove 161,000 cubic yards of sediment from Lake Accotink. Silt, which is washed into the lake via the creek, is slowly filling in the lake. This is not unusual for manmade lakes. Most lakes in densely developed areas require periodic dredging to mitigate against the effects of storm-water runoff, which carries vast amounts of sediments. When it meets slower moving water, such as lake water, the sediments drop out. Water depth on the side of the lake furthest from the marina is one foot in some places. If the lake is not dredged, it will not be able to support recreational boating.

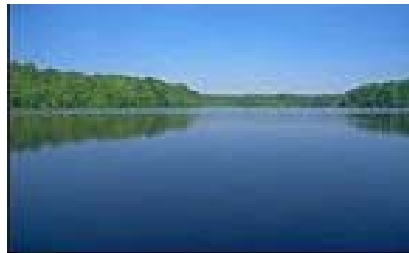
Q: When will the project start?

A: The project started September 29 when the contractor, Mobile Dredging and Pumping Company, was given notice to proceed. The project will be implemented in three stages. The first stage is the preparation of the disposal site. The second phase, which will be the first visible evidence of the project at Lake Accotink Park, will be the construction of a pipeline connecting the lake to the dis-

posal site. This began in mid-November. The third phase will be the actual dredging and is slated to begin in early March.

Q: Where will the dredged material go? Will there be trucks?

A: No trucks will be used to transport dredged material. Instead, the slurry (water and dredged silt) will be pumped via a pipeline along the Norfolk Southern Railroad right-of-way 2.8 miles to a site at the Virginia Concrete property on Industrial Road.



The average depth on the backside of the lake will be 7 feet after dredging is completed.

Q: When will I see indications of the dredging operations at Lake Accotink?

A: Pipe and supply deliveries began in mid-November. The pipe will run alongside the railroad right-of-way (near the camp office and gravel employee parking area), cross the park road and enter the water near the Small Pavilion. The pipeline in the lake will be marked with floats. The pipe will be covered with a steel plate where it crosses the road. In late February, other dredging equipment will be lowered onto the lake using a crane. This

equipment will include two barges and three push boats. Dredging will begin in early March and, barring weather-related delays, should be completed in December 2006. During the actual dredging, visitors may also see construction trucks, one of which may be kept on the beach to facilitate equipment fueling and fencing around equipment.

Q: Can the lake be used during the dredging?

A: Yes. Because this dredge is a hydraulic dredge, water must be kept in the lake at all times to float the equipment. Although some water will be pumped out with the slurry, the rate of water entering the lake from Accotink Creek will be greater than the water being pumped out of the lake. In the event of a prolonged drought, the flow of the pipeline can be reversed and water can be returned to the lake. Spring trout fishing, summer camps, boat rentals and the annual Cardboard Boat Regatta will continue as planned.

Q: When will the equipment run? Will it be noisy?

A: There will be some noise associated with dredging equipment similar to the level heard at many construction sites. However, the equipment will only be run weekdays from 7 a.m. – 5 p.m. Any changes to this schedule will be communicated with as much advance notice as possible.

(Continued on page 2)

Catch the news on spring trout fishing on page 2!



(Continued from page 1)

Q: Will the lake need to be dredged again?

A: This dredging will be the third dredging of Lake Accotink in 45 years. When the Corps of Engineers dammed Accotink Creek in 1918, a siltation problem was noticed almost immediately. The last time the lake was dredged in the 1980s, it was estimated that it would not need to be dredged again for 30 years. Instead, it was less than 20 years, so it is difficult to tell. There is some indication that the rate of siltation has been slowing, but unfortunately dredging is something that will always need to be performed periodically.

Q: What will happen to animals in the lake?

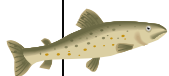
A: The cutter head of the dredge will extend eight feet into the water to extract siltation from the bottom of the lake. Anything that is smaller than six inches could potentially be sucked inside. However, the equipment moves very slowly and makes a lot of noise. Because of the noise, vibration and slow movement, most animals will have ample opportunity to move out of the equipment's path.

Q: If I have more questions, where can I go?

A: There is button on Fairfax County Park Authority's webpage for comments and questions. Go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/accotink/dredging.htm and click on "online feedback form."

Reminder!

Summer Camp
registration
begins
February 7th!



Spring trout fishing returns to Lake Accotink Park

Fairfax County Park Authority's spring trout stocking program will begin Friday February 10, at Lake Accotink Park. Fishing begins this same day. Accotink Creek, beginning beneath the dam, will be stocked for about a half mile. Stocking will alternate weekly between Lake Accotink Park and Lake Fairfax Park. Lake Fairfax Park will stock the creek and lake on Friday, February 17. Fishing will begin the following day on February 18. The last stocking will be at Lake Fairfax Park on April 14. The season ends April 23.

Pass sales start Monday January 16. Season passes are good at both Lake Accotink and Lake Fairfax Parks. A Virginia-issued fishing license is required, but a Trout Stamp is not.

Fees are as follows.

Season Pass: \$35 (\$30 for ages 11-15 and 60 and older)

Daily Pass: \$10 (\$9 for ages 11-15 and 60 and older)

*One child aged 10 and under fishes free with a paying adult.

Stocking Schedule:

Lake Accotink Park

- February 10
- February 24
- March 10
- March 24
- April 7

Lake Fairfax Park

- February 17 (fishing begins February 18)
- March 3
- March 17
- March 31
- April 14

Now Hiring!

Spring Break Camp Counselors

April 10-14, 2006



Counselors are needed for the following camps:

- Watershed Exploration
- Tennis (ages 8-13)
- Dog Care Camp

Preferred qualifications include a general interest in the subject matter and ability to work well with children. Must be at least 18 years old.

Call 703-569-3464 or stop by the main office for more information or to request an application.

Have a wonderful winter! ~ From the Lake Accotink Park staff

Make-a-Difference Day 2005

Litter is trash that it is out of place. Over 80 park neighbors, student and volunteer group representatives helped put litter in its place at Lake Accotink Park's Make-A-Difference Day Fall Watershed Cleanup on October 22. Despite the drizzle and chilly weather, this intrepid group collectively contributed almost 280-person hours to the effort. They filled 76 trash bags weighing 874 pounds. This is quite a feat when one realizes the most common form of litter found and placed in these trash bags was paper products, plastic bottles and cigarette butts. Lake Accotink Park staff would like to thank all the wonderful volunteers who aided this tremendous effort.



Volunteers clean along Highland Avenue.

The cleanup supported not only Make-A-Difference Day, but also the International Coastal Cleanup, which takes place in September and October. Almost 80 percent of litter found on beaches and in the ocean is from an inland source. Because of our volunteers, there are 874 pounds less of litter that can find its way to the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean.

The most unusual litter found was a lawn mower and a rear car axle that were dumped in the park. Anyone who observes evidence of dumping in the park is asked to call the Lake

Accotink Park main office at 703-569-0285.

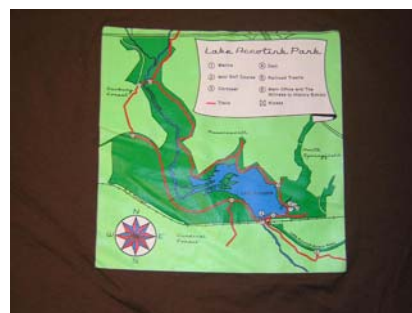
The next organized park cleanup will be **April 8 from 9 am – 1 pm**. If you have a group who is interested in holding a cleanup on another date, please contact the park office.

Lake Accotink Park T-Shirt Sale

\$12

Sizes: Adult S-2XL

Available at the
main office



(Back of shirt shown)

Not your typical day camp

“What’s your watershed address?” This question is one of the first of many that campers attending Lake Accotink Park’s Watershed Exploration Camp seek to answer. A watershed is an area of land in which all the water that falls ultimately flows into the same larger body of water. For example, if you live on Flag run Drive in Springfield, all the rain that falls on your house flows into Flag Run. From there, it flows into Lake Accotink and into the Accotink Creek before making its way to the Potomac River and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay. That’s a lengthy address! But, it illustrates the point that water quality has far reaching effects.

Watershed Exploration Camp, a popular Spring Break Camp offered at Lake Accotink Park, is now in its fourth year. Because of its popularity, it will also be offered

for two one-week sessions in July. Throughout the session, campers explore the Accotink Creek watershed learning how individual actions can affect environmental health and about the plants and animals that inhabit our watershed.



Campers practice biological water quality monitoring using stream nets.

In camps past, participants have witnessed bald eagles soaring above Lake Accotink, monitored the biological water quality of Accotink Creek, kept a journal of observations made on daily hikes and planted willows stakes to help shore up a portion of Accotink Creek stream bank. It is amazing to realize that there are all of these opportunities to connect with nature so close to the Beltway. The camp is perfect for any child that enjoys being outdoors, experimenting and observing.

For more information about this camp, please call 703-569-3464. Camp registration begins February 7. Information on other spring break and summer camps will be available in the spring edition of *Park-takes* magazine.

Create a winter wonderland for wildlife

Throughout time, people have been perfecting ways to store food. A century ago, it may have been difficult to enjoy fruits and veggies during the winter months. With refrigerating, freezing and canning, people can enjoy a range of food choices during the winter. Colder temperatures and shorter daylight hours don't affect most people's dinners.

Animals that do not migrate during the winter are challenged to find food during the winter months. Berry and seed sources are diminished. Ice and snow can make foraging even more difficult. Reduced daylight hours mean there is less time to find food sources that do exist.

With the following seven tips, anyone can make their backyard appealing to wildlife. This not only makes it potentially easier for critters to survive the winter, but can bring animals and birds to a safe and easily observable distance for you and your family to enjoy.



1. Fill Up Bird Feeders

Birds will appreciate this easy treat, especially if there is ice and snow. Over 65 million Americans feed wild birds. Unlike feeding other wildlife, there is no evidence that feeding wild birds has an adverse af-

fect on their populations. Different types of seed will attract different birds. Two seeds that are popular with many types of birds are black oiled sunflower seeds (for birds like cardinals and chickadees who prefer larger seeds) and white proso millet (for birds like sparrows who prefer smaller seeds). Suet or other animal-fat products will attract insect-eating birds like woodpeckers.



2. Make Water Available

Maintaining a reliable water source will ensure birds use your feeders. Other animals may be drawn to de-iced bird baths as well. Heaters for this purpose can be purchased at garden and bird stores.



3. Maintain Natural Food Sources

Allow summer and fall flowers to go to seed. These seeds are a natural food source for birds and other small animals.



4. Provide Shelter

Birds need places to rest warmly and safely during the winter. Keeping birdhouses in your yard, even during the winter, is one way to do this. Birdhouses provide a good

storm shelter as well.



5. Make Piles

Stack rocks or fallen branches in your yard with the largest materials on the bottom. This creates a comfortable, safe and warm winter home for hibernating butterflies and other insects as well as reptiles, birds and small mammals.



6. Leave Some Leaves

Don't rake all of the leaves in your yard. A blanket of leaves helps keep the ground warmer and enriches the soil. If you need to rake them, leave a pile in which salamanders and toads can hibernate.



7. Leave Small No-Mow Zones

Leave small patches of your garden standing with clumps of dead flowers, grasses or vines for rabbits, birds and other animals. Small insects also hibernate in areas such as these. In the spring, birds will use the dried out material for nests.



Thanks for Asking: Can I fish at Lake Accotink Park?



"Can I fish at Lake Accotink Park?" The answer is, "Yes!" Fishing is permitted at Lake Accotink Park year-round in both the creek and the lake and is a popular pastime here. On almost any given day, you can find at least one angler trying his or her luck. For most of the year, all you will need is a Virginia-issued fishing license. This can be obtained from the Virginia Game and Inland Fisheries webpage or from a sporting goods store. Children under age 16 do not need a fishing license.

However, to fish in the *creek* from February 10-April 23 you will need to also purchase either a season or a day fishing pass from Lake Accotink Park. During this time period the creek is stocked with rainbow

trout. The trout fishing program is supported solely through user fees; no tax dollars support the program, so it must be able to pay for itself. (You can find more information about this program on page 2 of this newsletter.)

If you want to try your luck in the creek, fishing must be done from the shore. To fish the lake, you may fish from the shore (though not from the sea wall because of the proximity to the sidewalk), launch your own boat, or fish from a rental boat when the marina is open May-October.

All fish caught at Lake Accotink Park can be eaten. However, all Virginia State fishing regulations regarding creel limits, fishing methods and minimum fish size for

keeping must be followed and are enforced. You can find Virginia fishing regulations online or pick up a booklet of the rules anywhere fishing licenses are sold.

Whether you choose to keep what you have caught or prefer to catch-and-release, fishing can be a rewarding and relaxing pastime. Lake Accotink Park offers "Go Fish!" a program geared toward youngsters and their families to teach the catch-and-release fishing method and what fish live in Lake Accotink. Classes are offered March 11, 9-11 am and April 1, 9-11 am. Fees are \$10 per adult, \$8 per child 7-15. Please, no children under seven. Call 703-569-0285 to register, as these classes fill up quickly!

Check-It-Out:

Catch up with the new and exciting things going on at Lake Accotink Park!

Have you heard... Stephen Reynolds was awarded an Outstanding Volunteer award for 2005? Reynolds has volunteered at Lake Accotink Park for two years and has worked on a number of projects. Projects of note this past year include putting together Lake Accotink Park's exhibit at June's Heritage Day and initiating and following the park's application to be part of the Civil War Trails program. An interpretive marker will be installed in 2006.

Have you noticed.... Lake Accotink Park sells postcards at the main office? A former park art instructor, Christina Rodriguez, contributed water colors works of foxes in a den and wading herons. Other postcards available include works by a local artist and a photo of the railroad trestle during the

Civil War. Postcards are \$1 each and are the perfect way to keep in touch with loved ones.

And... congratulations to Park Manager, Tawny Hammond who was awarded a 2005 Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce Public Service Award for her commitment to providing quality programs at Lake Accotink Park and for helping to make Lake Accotink Park a valued part of the Springfield community.

Have you seen... the pipeline begun in the Heming parking lot? This is the beginning of the pipeline that will connect the park with Virginia Concrete, the disposal site for dredged material from Lake Accotink.

And finally... you may have noticed that Lake Accotink Park's carousel is horse-less during the winter months. This is because the carousel is an antique. The horses were built of hand carved wood and cast aluminum between 1926 and 1931. They are sensitive to the elements and are taken off the carousel when the weather becomes cold to be stored safely away. The park's maintenance staff also uses this time to give the horses a fresh coat of paint so they still look brand new. The carousel is reassembled and inspected for safety in April. This spring, take a moment to notice its new green, blue and yellow canopy.



Spring Bunny Events for Children and Pets Saturday April 15th

For Children:

Spring Egg Hunt
And Photos

12-3 pm

\$8 per child

(fee includes egg hunt and digital photo on disk)

For Pets:

Spring Bonnet Contest, Bone
Hunt And Photos With The
Spring Bunny

4-6 pm

\$6 per pet

(fee includes all activities and digital photo on disk)

To Register: Call 703-569-0285 to pay with Visa or Master Card. Or mail check with name and program title made out to FCPA to Lake Accotink Park, 7500 Accotink Park Road, Springfield, Virginia 22150.



Make good on a New Year's resolution

Graced with a scenic lake and criss-crossed by forest and wetland trails throughout its 493 acres, Lake Accotink Park has long served as a destination for nature lovers and outdoor enthusiasts. And for those looking to mix an appreciation for the outdoors with their personal goals for getting in shape, the park offers an array of opportunities for people of all ages to exercise and build activity into their days.

Open every day except December 25th, Lake Accotink Park provides numerous opportunities in all seasons for trail users to bike, walk, run and jog. From May to October, canoes, pedal boats and rowboats are available for rental (call for days and hours), providing a great workout and a unique experience--only minutes from the dense urban spaces of northern Virginia.

For some people, fitting fitness into busy lives is best done in a structured setting and under the guidance of an instructor or coach. For that reason, Lake Accotink Park offers classes in a variety of fitness topics, from biking to fitness walking to tai chi, pilates and more. Biking and Dynamic Nature Walking classes are scheduled to begin in late March, meeting once per week for five weeks. Pilates, mat fusion classes, and tai chi are slated to begin in late May and also run five weeks. A new offering—especially for seniors—is Chair Fitness class, which teaches specialized exercises that can be done while seated or holding onto a chair to reduce the risk of falling. Chair Fitness class will be held Thursdays at 10 a.m. beginning April 6th.

For children and teens, for whom regular exercise is essential to their health and development, the park offers weekly classes in sports such as soccer, basketball, tennis and volleyball. And canine residents are not overlooked: Walking for Fitness Doggie and Me is a great way for both human and canine companion to gain tips and guidance that reach beyond simply “going for a walk.”

Taking a class offers so many benefits beyond the content you will learn. You'll meet people with similar interests and goals. You will gain practice and learn new skills to improve your fitness level. You will get to nurture mind and body while immersed in natural surroundings. And best of all, you'll have fun!

Marina Open Hire Dates

Are you interested in working at Lake Accotink Park's marina this summer (May-October)?

Stop by the main office on one of the following dates to fill out an application and interview with a manager. No appointment is necessary, just bring two references with you.

⇒ Saturday March 25, noon-4 pm

⇒ Wednesday April 12, noon-4 pm

Please expect the interview to last about 20 minutes.

Volunteer Open House

Do you want to become more involved with Lake Accotink Park, meet new people and use your skills while having fun?

Join staff for an afternoon of information sharing, hot drinks and light refreshments as we discuss volunteer opportunities at Lake Accotink Park including environmental and program-related opportunities and Trail Watch.

⇒ Sunday February 19, 2-4 pm

We will meet at the main office.

Fairfax County Park Authority
Lake Accotink Park



7500 Accotink Park Road
Springfield, Virginia 22150

Phone: 703-569-0285

TTY: 703-569-5200

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks

Park Management:

Tawny Hammond, Park Manager

Julie Tahan, Assistant Manager

Lee Ann Shenefiel, Operations Manager

Axel Boy, Evening Supervisor

Ed Miller, Grounds Supervisor

For FLAP comments or suggestions,
please email:

Tawny.Hammond@fairfaxcounty.gov



ADA Accommodations: Fairfax County is committed to giving all citizens equal access to recreation and leisure opportunities. In keeping with that policy and the Americans with Disabilities Act, reasonable accommodations are provided to individuals with disabilities in all Park Authority programs, services, and facilities. ADA accommodations include sign interpreters, alternative information formats, program modifications and inclusion support. Contact the ADA Specialist at 703-324-8563 or (TTY) (703) 803-3354 for additional information.